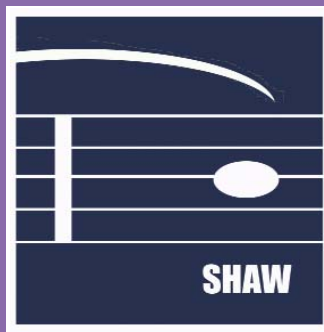


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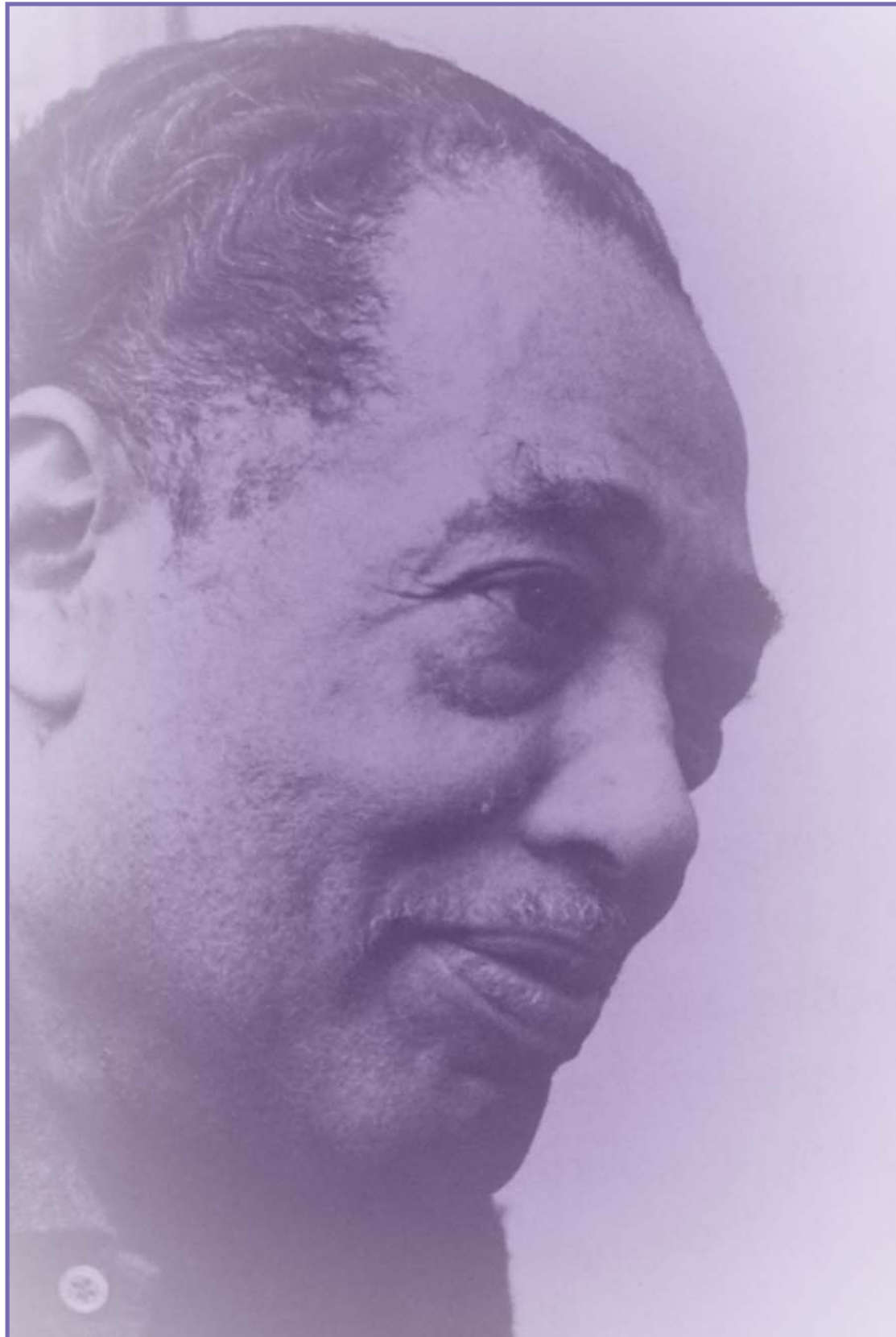
DRAFT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR A CULTURAL DESTINATION DISTRICT WITHIN WASHINGTON, DC'S GREATER SHAW / U STREET



★ ★ ★ Government of the District of Columbia
DC Office of Planning

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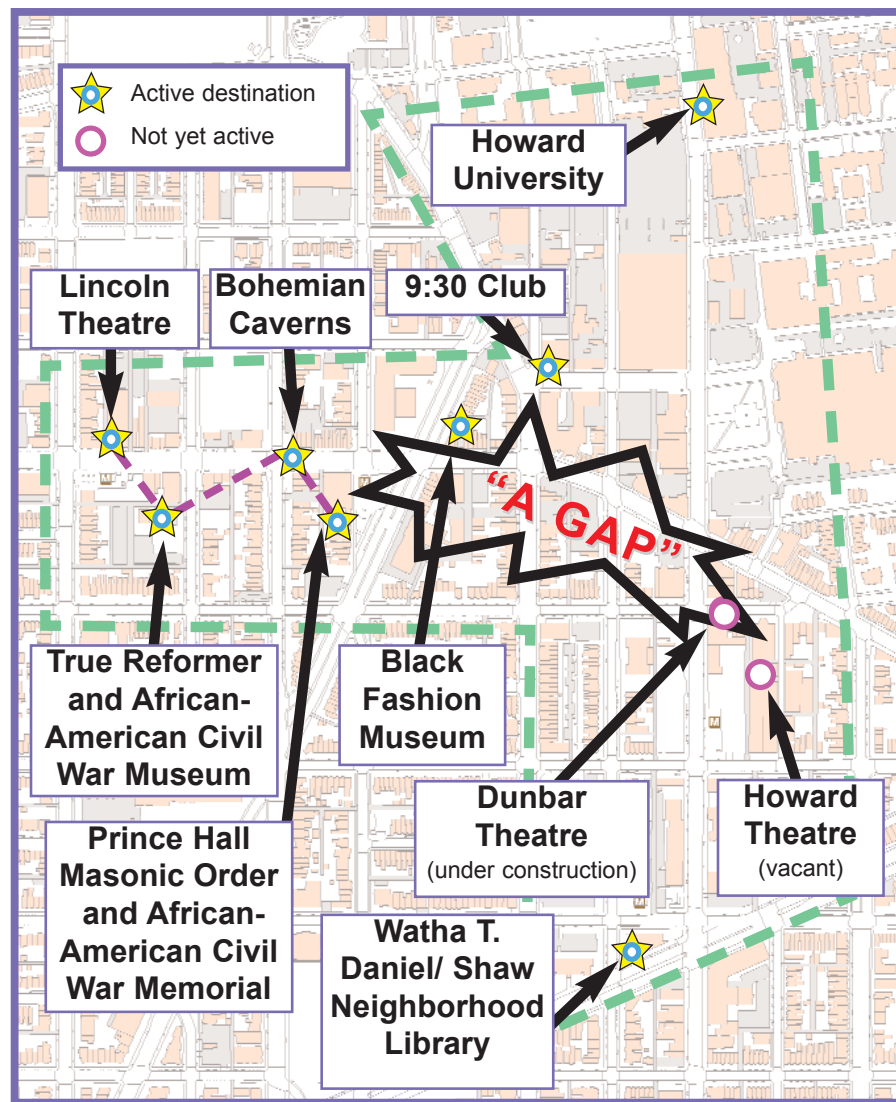
*"Music is my mistress,
and she plays second fiddle to no one."*

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington
Washington, DC's Native Son &
World Legend
(1899 - 1974)

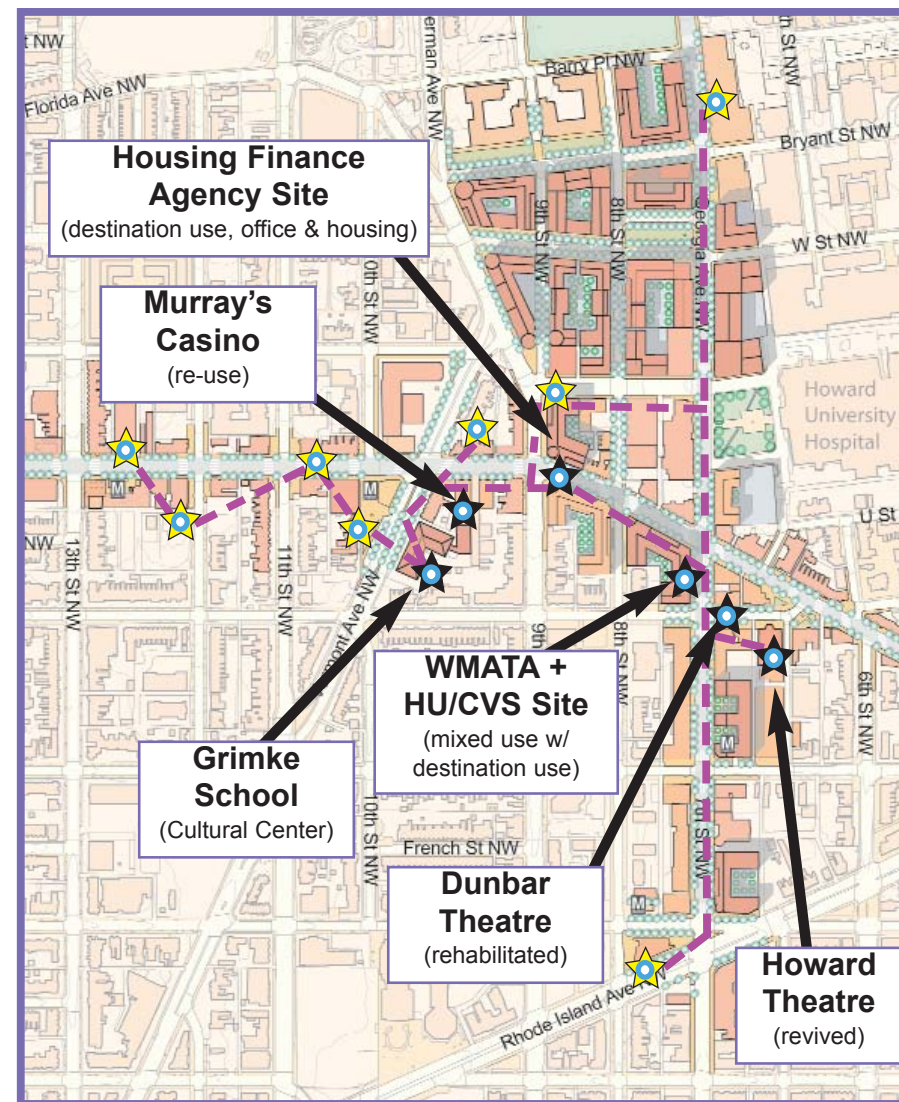


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Existing Figure Ground



Illustrative Site Plan

I. Overview

The District of Columbia, other partner agencies, and private landholders have a unique opportunity to use public and private owned assets to leverage considerable community and citywide benefits within the Shaw-Howard University and U Street/African-American Civil War Memorial/Cardozo Metro station areas. In its "heyday," this area was the heart of an important economic, cultural, social and institutional center of a proud and accomplished African-American community, many of which were affiliated with Howard University and Hospital. This was the neighborhood that introduced to the global community the talents and intelligence of numerous African-American pioneers, including Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, perhaps its most recognized. Many of the building assets, which formed the backdrop for this community and the transformative contributions and events they pioneered, remain, and many are in active use. Significant sites like the vacant Howard and Dunbar Theatres represent a monumental opportunity to re-knit and enhance the fabric of this history and to create a more complete destination neighborhood where cultural landmarks are as "pearls on a string" of supporting mixed-use development. "DUKE" seeks to guide future development strategically by capitalizing upon this historic context to restore this contemporary uptown neighborhood with 18-hour destinations.

Current neighborhood needs can be addressed while building upon the area's extensive history in order to attract local and visiting guests from the National Mall and new Convention Center, located one Metro station away. Many public owned sites are within "the gap" which links vibrant U Street along Florida Avenue to 7th Street NW. Based upon technical land development analysis, considerable community input and the area's locational advantages, this development framework provides direction to the community, private sec-

*contemporary uptown neighborhood
with 18-hour destinations*

tor and public agencies in revitalizing this transit oriented neighborhood to achieve a cohesive and inclusive district which meets the community and District government development goals. Specific sites are used to illustrate development potential and programmatic targets. Recommendations are provided for others.

Project Boundaries. The Project Area is primarily focused upon the commercially zoned properties bound by Barry Place NW to the north; 6th Street NW to the east; Rhode Island Avenue to the south; and 13th Street to the west. The area is served by both the Shaw Howard University Metro and U Street/African American Civil War Memorial/Cardozo metro stations. Howard Theatre and the Lincoln Theatre serve as bookends to the many cultural heritage assets of the Project Area. Additionally, both theaters are owned by the District of Columbia government.

cultural landmarks are as "pearls on a string" of supporting mixed use development



Lincoln Theatre



True Reformer Building



Bohemian Caverns



Prince Hall Grand Lodge



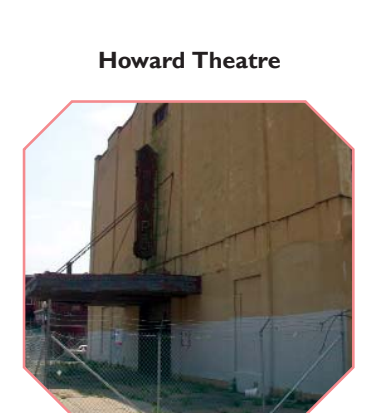
African-American Civil War Memorial



9:30 Club



Dunbar Theatre



Howard Theatre

II. Existing Neighborhood Context

The District of Columbia's investment in the Shaw-Howard University and U Street / African American Civil War Memorial / Cardozo Metro stations has helped to increase access between the metropolitan region to this historic district and intersection of historic neighborhoods. The District's investment has not been realized fully, as epitomized by the underutilization of key land and buildings abutting and within close proximity to these stations. Like other commercial districts within the city, 7th and Florida Avenue experienced considerable disinvestment due in part to economic downturns linked to middle class flight, urban riots and general market shifts. However, the momentum has changed as there is now the confluence of an increasingly strong market, renewed interest in mixed use transit oriented development by private sector developers and investors, and a desire on the part of local government to use its assets and resources catalytically.

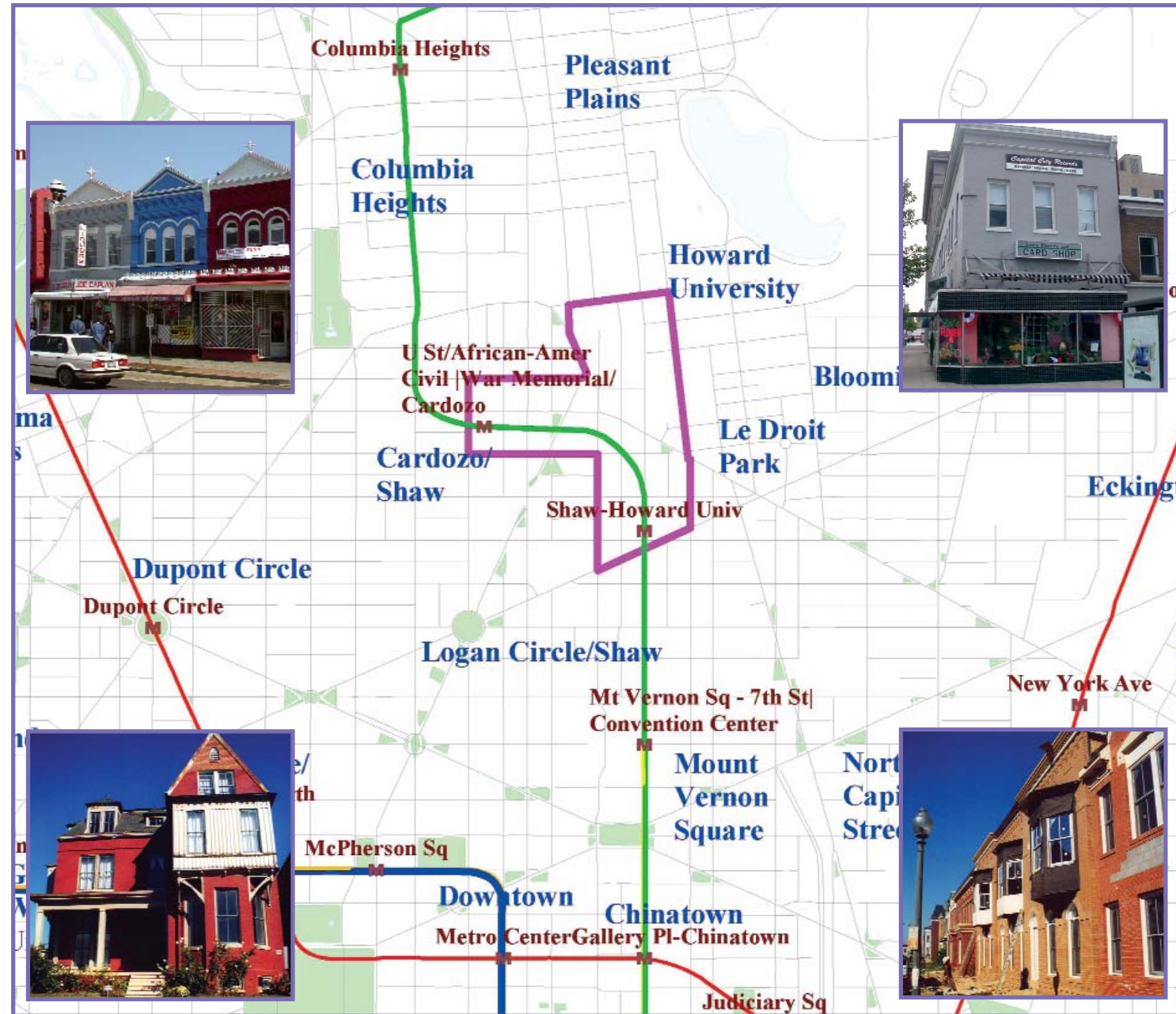
THE NEIGHBORHOODS. 7th Street and Florida Avenue converge at the center of several distinct neighborhoods: U Street/Cardozo, Shaw, LeDroit Park and Howard University. These historic neighborhoods were and are the center of a very rich and catalytic African-American and jazz history.

To the north of the Project Area, Howard University with its affiliated hospital is an anchor institution. Approximately 12,000 undergraduate and graduate students attend this historic university. To the south, the new \$850 million Washington Convention Center opened in 2003. The Center attracts millions of visitors annually and is expected to generate nearly \$1.5 billion in revenue.

The neighborhoods are mixed socially, economically and culturally. The neighborhoods include a growing number of homeowners, but the needs of renters are a rapidly growing concern. Incomes vary across a wide spectrum. Area households are a mix of families, singles, and seniors. Residents and merchants are organized through several active organizations--Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, 14th & U and Shaw Main Street districts, civic associations, and faith-based organizations among others.

Given this area's strategic location, only minutes north of the Central Business District and new Convention Center, and the historic architectural character, neighborhoods in this area are very attractive. Many residents, however, are concerned about gentrification and affordability in both housing and retail services.

RETAIL. Whether established or new, resident demand for quality retail services, goods, and innovative entertainment is strong. Economic studies of similar areas in the District have confirmed that there is considerable sales leakage to surrounding jurisdictions. The retail mix in the Project Area and to the north is primarily comprised of a drugstore, fast food restaurants, hair salons, liquor stores, nail shops, and church operated retail. Currently, there are no distinguishing retail anchors within the area. The nearest grocery store is a few blocks away at 7th and O Streets NW. Howard University hopes to attract a new grocery store next to its campus as a part of its pro-



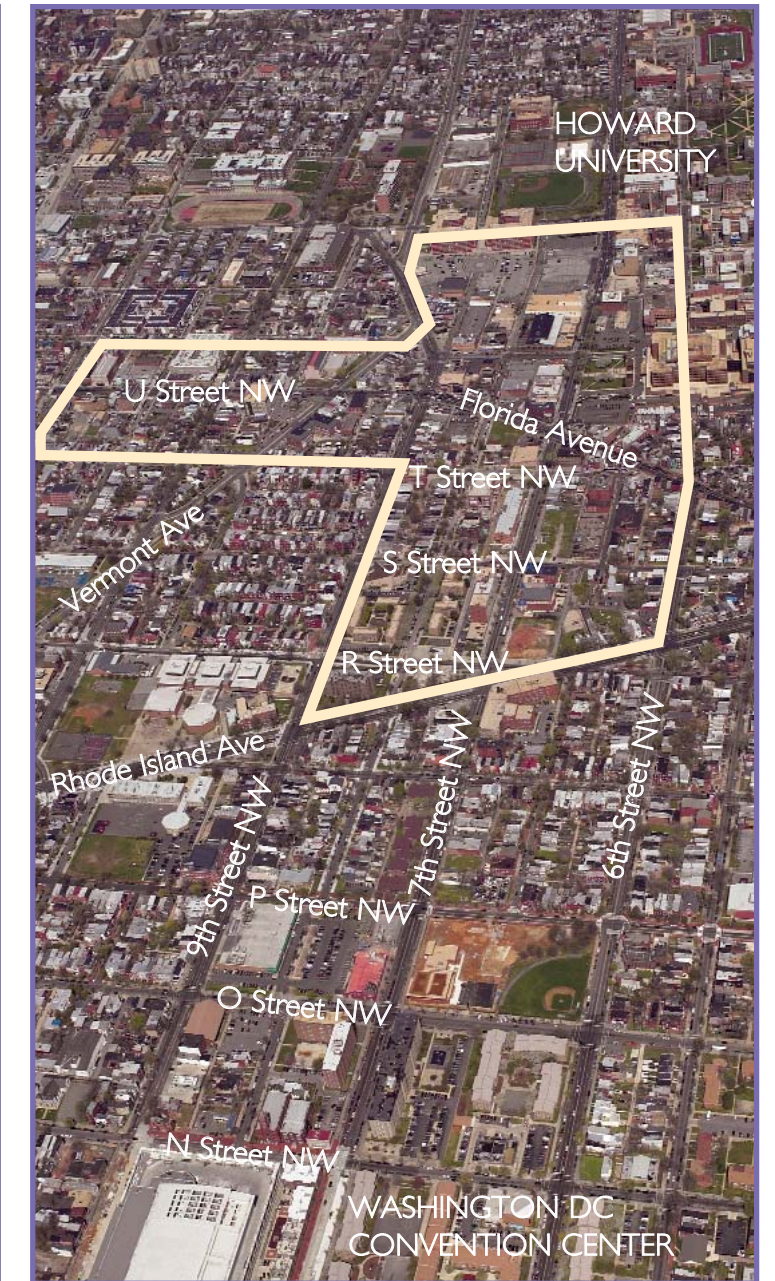
The Project Area is within close proximity to Downtown DC, the National Mall and the new Washington, DC Convention Center. The area is surrounded by thriving neighborhoods with significant historic housing and commercial stock.

posed HU Town Center project, at the north end of the Project Area. Development activity on U Street NW west of the Project Area continues with the addition of new mixed-use projects which include street-level retail, sit down restaurants and boutiques.

HOUSING. Home sales and property values are increasing throughout all surrounding neighborhoods. Displacement and affordability are ongoing concerns. Recent new and rehab residential developments near the Project Area include a number of single-family rowhouse dwellings in the historic LeDroit Park neighborhood. Howard University entered a partnership with Fannie Mae to develop these properties for its employees and the general public. The sale of those

homes yielded impressive results. Market rate townhomes and condos continue to be developed on historic U Street and throughout the neighborhoods. Howard University purchased a 125-bed extended care facility between S and T Streets on 7th Street NW and seeks guidance about long-term use of this temporary university offices site.

TRANSPORTATION, TRAFFIC & PARKING. The District has embarked on a public policy agenda that stresses the need to concentrate and maximize new development at or near Metro stations to increase Metro ridership while reducing the need for personal vehicles. The area is accessible from a variety of transportation methods including via Shaw-Howard University and U Street-Cardozo



The Project Area is anchored by the Washington Convention Center and Downtown to the south and Howard University & Hospital to the north.

Metro stations. Up to 4600 metrorail entries and exits at each station occur each day. The 66, 68, 70, 71, 90, 92, 93, 96, G8 and X3 bus lines stop within the Project Area. Bus ridership varies from line to line, but the Georgia Avenue/7th St (70/71) bus carries over 20,000 riders daily; U St-Garfield (90/92/93), over 17,000. Over 27,000 personal vehicles pass through daily. Much of the area was built before cars were popular. Therefore, parking is limited and area residents are concerned about the impact of new development on current parking supply. In Winter 2005, DDOT's U Street/Shaw Transportation and Parking Study should provide recommendations about managing current and projected growth, transit, traffic and parking within the area.



III. Historical / Cultural Context

The following background information is printed in *Greater U Street Historic District* guide, published by DC Office of Planning - Historic Preservation Division. The text was written by Kimberly Prothro Williams.

RISE OF A CITY WITHIN THE CITY

Beginning in the 1890s, Washington experienced an increased sense of racial hostility. Many of the city's laws, passed during Reconstruction and aimed at the civil rights of African Americans, were ignored during the 1880s and 1890s, and then in 1901, were officially dropped from the city's legal code. Imposed segregation followed, and out of necessity, the city's African American population of all socio-economic levels coalesced into those areas of the city open to them, including, most notably, Greater U Street and the adjoining Strivers' Section. The influx of African Americans into these neighborhoods hastened the exodus of many whites. Between 1900 and 1920 the racially mixed neighborhood progressively changed to a more homogenous African American one.

While the Greater U Street area represented all socio-economic levels within the African American community, the presence of Howard University continued to attract students and educators that contributed to the area's cultural and literary life. To name a few, Greater U Street area was home to Francis Cardozo, the first principal of M Street High School; Francis Grimké, a writer and orator who champi-

oned constitutional rights for African Americans; Robert and Mary Church Terrell, lawyer, and civil rights activist, respectively; William L. Houston, dean of the law school at Howard University; Georgia Douglas Johnson, poet and host of an influential weekly literary salon at her house on S Street; John Lankford, architect; Edward "Duke" Ellington, jazz musician; and Lillian Evans Tibbs (Madame Evanti), opera singer.

The overall racial climate in Washington inspired a new ideology among African Americans that transformed U Street into a self-sufficient community and the center of African American life. A group of rising middle-class black entrepreneurs rejected the traditional approach of gaining racial equality through civil rights advocacy, and proposed instead the idea of racial solidarity and self-sufficiency. Influential leaders such as Calvin Chase, editor of the *Washington Bee*, Washington's preeminent African American newspaper; John Cromwell of the *People's Advocate*; Andrew Hilyer, founder of the Union League of the District of Columbia; and organizations such as the NAACP, led by W. E. B. DuBois, preached the benefits of racial unity and working together to achieve advancement. Most importantly, though, these men pushed for self-sufficiency through economic development. To spread the word, these leaders spoke out at churches and schools, through newspapers and on the street. In 1892, 1894, and 1895, the Union League of the District of Columbia published business directories that urged the African American community to patronize only their own businesses, and in particular those listed in the directories.

The Greater U Street neighborhood heeded the call of its leaders. Between 1886 and 1920, the number of African American owned businesses in the area rose from fifteen to 300, with the bulk of new businesses coming between 1910 and 1920. Entrepreneurs, like John Lewis; local businesses, such as the Murray Brothers Printing Company which published Washington's most influential African American newspaper, the *Washington Afro-American and Tribune*; and national benevolent organizations, such as the United Order of



Dr. Charles Drew. (Scurlock Studio Records; Courtesy National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution)



The Dozen Club at the True Reformer in 1917. (Adelaide Robinson)

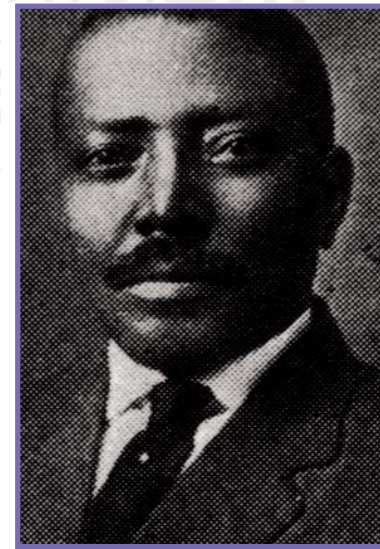
True Reformers, together built the infrastructure necessary to help the African American community gain its independence from white Washington.

While the rows of Victorian-era dwellings behind the major corridors of Greater U Street remained intact, U Street itself gained new and varied businesses in existing buildings and on its remaining vacant lots.

Churches, hotels, restaurants, banks, fraternal organizations and self-help groups, theaters, jazz clubs and other entertainment and commercial facilities that catered to the African American community joined already existing commercial enterprises. New businesses such as printers, druggists, undertakers and more emerged in the area and fulfilled the community's need for services. As the variety of businesses increased in the U Street area, African Americans became even less dependent upon white Washington for services and became increasingly self-sufficient. At the same time, African Americans broke away from traditional employment roles and moved in to fields that required higher levels of education, and thereby gained affluence and prestige.

AFRICAN AMERICAN BUILDERS & ARCHITECTS

Many of the commercial and institutional buildings that helped U Street achieve its success were designed, constructed, and financed by African Americans. John Whitelaw Lewis, an African American entrepreneur and financial pioneer, devoted to the growth of an independent black Washington, constructed two major institutions in the area--the Industrial Savings Bank at 11th and U Streets (1917)--the only African American bank in the city, and the eponymous Whitelaw Hotel at 1839 13th Street NW (1919)--the only lodging facility in the city dedicated to African American patronage. A former hod carrier, Lewis saw the need to provide financial opportunities to his own people, and formed the Laborers Building



John Whitelaw Lewis. (Courtesy Cultural Tourism DC)



John Lankford. (Courtesy Cultural Tourism DC)

and Loan Association. The association helped the working class "save a part of their small earnings" by providing homes for them, and assisted them in purchasing their own houses. The group's first purchase was the row of nine newly completed row houses on 13th Street between U and V Streets.

The Industrial Savings Bank, designed by African American architect Isaiah T. Hatton offered banking services to African Americans for the first time. At first a small enterprise, the bank benefited from a devoted clientele, and continued to grow until it failed during the national banking crisis in 1932. Two years later, it was reorganized and is still doing business at 11th and U Streets.

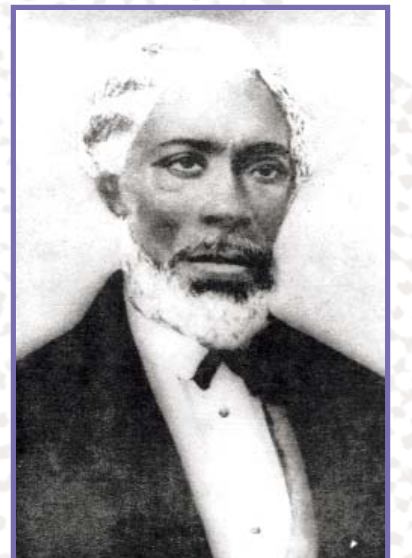
The institutions established by John Lewis were later followed by others along U Street, including the 1902 True Reformer Building; the 1908-1912 12th Street YMCA (now the Thurgood Marshall Center for Service and Heritage); the 1919-1920 Southern Aid Society building; and the 1922-1930 Prince Hall Masonic Temple.

The True Reformer Building at 12th and U Streets was one of the first institutional buildings erected by and for the African American community along U Street. The United Order of True Reformers, based in Richmond, Virginia, was founded as a fraternal and benevolent organization that served the economic and social needs of African Americans.

The Prince Hall Masonic Temple at 1000 U Street, designed by prominent black architect Albert I. Cassell and constructed between 1922 and 1930, was built to house a chapter of the first African American Masonic order. The temple has been continuously associated with the lodge, and continues to provide services for African Americans, such as social gatherings and commercial office space.

The 12th Street YMCA was constructed between 1908 and 1912 to designs prepared by African American architect William Sydney Pittman. Housed in an impressive Italian Renaissance-style building at 1816 12th Street N, it is the first purpose-built African American YMCA in the United States, a movement founded in 1853 by former slave and abolitionist Anthony Bowen. The building's construction attracted financial support from Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Company, who also contributed one-third of the costs for the construction of over 5,000 African American schools throughout the South.

Anthony Bowen. (Kautz Family Archives, YMCA of the USA)



Duke Ellington and one of his early bands, circa 1919. Courtesy: Archives Centers, National Museum of American History.

Native son Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington (1899-1974), the internationally renowned composer and musician, spent his teenage years at 1805 13th Street (1910-1914) and then at 1816 13th Street (1915-1917). Ellington was born on April 29, 1899, at 2129 Ward Place NW, the home of his maternal grandparents. Ellington's musical interest first began at home. His mother Daisy Ellington, a native Washingtonian, played the family piano. His father James Edward Ellington of North Carolina played popular songs and arias. He began playing around age seven. He later attributed his professional success to his parents, his music teachers, local musicians, and the patrons of Frank Holliday's pool room at 624 T Street NW. (Courtesy Cultural Tourism DC)



Madame Lillian Evanti (Lillian Evans Tibbs). (Moorland Spingarn Research Center, Howard University)

Lillian Evans Tibbs (1890-1967), professionally known as Madame Lillian Evanti, was a lyric soprano who received international acclaim. She was the first black woman to sing opera with an organized company in Europe.

A native Washingtonian, Anne Wilson Lillian Evans was the daughter of teachers Anne Brooks and Dr. Bruce Evans. She sang in her first public concert, a charity event, at age four. Evanti attended Armstrong Manual Training School and Miners Teachers College, and graduated from Howard University School of Music in 1917. In 1924 she left for Paris for further training and for better professional opportunities at a time when American opera and classical music companies refused to admit African Americans. (Courtesy Cultural Tourism DC)

The 12th Street YMCA, currently the Thurgood Marshall Center, provided the locale for social and civic activities, as well as dormitories for extended stays. Poet Langston Hughes lived here in the early 1920s, and Dr. Charles Drew, who pioneered the preservation of blood plasma, was an active member. Thurgood Marshall, the first African American Supreme Court Justice, held early meetings for civil rights legislation in the building.

The Southern Aid Society Building, located at 7th and T Streets, was constructed in 1919-1920 by the Society as a mixed-use building with commercial space, hotel rooms, and a first-run movie theater, the Dunbar Theater. The Society, founded in 1893 in Richmond, Virginia, was one of the first African American owned and operated insurance companies in the country. Designed by African American architect Isaiah T. Hatton, the Southern Aid Society building is currently under renovation.

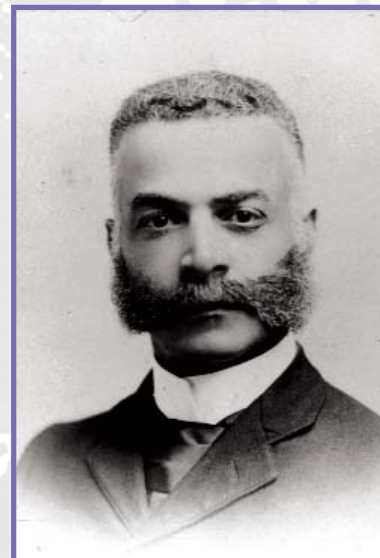
The development of these major institutions along U Street, and the growth of African American businesses provided the community economic security and stability that ultimately inspired the corridor's growth as an unrivaled entertainment center. By 1930, U Street had become the community's main



boulevard, known nationally as "Black Broadway." Several first-run movie theaters, a multitude of nightclubs and ballrooms, pool halls and stores operated alongside the offices of African American doctors, dentists, and lawyers.

During its heyday, U Street was home to a rich variety of theaters that extended from 7th to 14th Street. The Minnehaha Theatre (Ben's Chili Bowl) opened as a nickelodeon theater in 1909 at 1213 U Street NW. This was followed by the Hiawatha Theatre at 11th and U Streets and the Howard Theatre at 620 T Street NW, both in 1910; the Dunbar Theatre in the Southern Aid Society Building in 1919-1920; the Lincoln Theatre at 1215 U Street, in 1921-23, and the Republic and Booker T. theaters, mid-1920s, in the 1300 and 1400 blocks of U Street, (both demolished). The Howard was the first theater building in the nation erected specifically for African Americans. The Lincoln Theatre, built as a first-run movie house, was praised as "the largest and finest theater for colored people exclusively anywhere in the U.S."

Other entertainment facilities, such as restaurants, nightclubs, dance halls, and billiard halls grew up along U Street, extending the same length of the corridor. When it opened in 1926 in the basement of the drugstore at 2001 11th Street NW, Bohemian Caverns was considered the "doyenne" of U Street. The club, which catered to Washington's African American elite featured cave-like interior finishes (now recreated in the original basement space). Other popular clubs included the Republic Gardens in the 1400 block of U Street; the Bali at the northeast corner of 14th and T Streets; the Lincoln Colonnade behind the Lincoln Theatre; the Turf Club at 1228 U Street NW; Club Louisiana in the



Archibald Grimké. (Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University)



Howard Theatre.



Louis Armstrong at Club Bali. (Courtesy Historical Society of Washington)

2000 block of 14th Street; the Casbah at 1211 U Street NW; and the Brass Rail at 14th and T Streets. During its heyday, U Street literally reverberated with the sounds of Nat "King" Cole, Cab Calloway, Pearl Bailey, Sarah Vaughn, "Jelly Roll" Morton, Louis Armstrong, Edward "Duke" Ellington, and Ray Charles.

CHURCHES & SCHOOLS

Prior to the Civil War, African Americans and whites, although segregated during the services, attended the same churches. After the war, and as an expression of their freedom, many African Americans established their own churches. In Washington, at least four such black churches began in the U Street area: Berean Baptist Church; Saint Augustine's Catholic Church; Freedom Baptist Church; and the Lincoln Congregational Temple United Church of Christ.

Like churches, schools provided an important foundation for African American society. Originally racially mixed, segregated schools were imposed after Reconstruction. The first African American school in the U Street area was erected in 1880 at 10th and U Streets. The school was named the Garnet School in honor of prominent abolitionist Henry Highland Garnet. In 1893, Patterson School was built adjacent to Garnet School, and in 1929, a larger school, Garnet-Patterson Junior High School, was built to replace the earlier two. Although originally built in the 1880s and 1890s as white schools, Phelps School (renamed Grimké School in 1934) and Harrison School were transferred into the black school system.

THE "NEW U"

When the Supreme Court overturned restrictive covenants in 1948, and African Americans were legally free to move anywhere they desired, DC began to desegregate. Many of the African Americans who chose to leave the U Street area were the most affluent and were drawn to, and could afford, newer houses in the expanding suburbs. The departure of the professional class from the U Street area altered its socio-economic make-up. The formerly owner-occupied, single-family dwellings were converted into multi-family rental units and rooming houses that catered to a more transient population. Increased density, overcrowding, and poverty began to plague the once middle-class area.



Thurgood Marshall. (Courtesy Cultural Tourism DC)

Throughout the 1950s, other Supreme Court decisions continued the desegregation of Washington, and ironically fur-

ther contributed to the economic decline of the neighborhood. In 1953, the Supreme Court ruled that the "lost laws" of Reconstruction guaranteeing equal access were valid. Stores, restaurants and other establishments that served only whites were now prohibited from doing so. The *Washington Post*

described the Supreme Court decision as a victory that would destroy "all enforced segregation and discrimination." The unintended result of the desegregation of public facilities was that businesses in the U Street area had now to compete with those downtown. With the dissemination of the African American population across the metropolitan area, the shops and businesses along U Street became less convenient. Following their customers, many existing and new businesses went elsewhere and the number of commercial enterprises that once thrived along U Street began to decline.

In April 1968, the riots that followed the assassination of [Reverend Dr.] Martin Luther King, Jr. devastated much of the social and economic infrastructure of the neighborhood, with the area around 14th and U Streets particularly hard hit by the looting and burning of buildings. Federally funded urban renewal efforts in the 1960s and 1970s began to rebuild the neighborhood, with new housing units and social service initiatives. In more recent years, the opening of Metro's Green Line, the distinctive building stock, and the pedestrian-oriented commercial development have encouraged economic growth and vitality of the area. The erection of new buildings on vacant lots and the restorations of historic buildings such as the Lincoln Theatre, the Whitelaw Hotel, the 12th Street YMCA, and the True Reformer Building, have contributed to the rejuvenation of the Greater U Street neighborhood. Community efforts, such as the recognition of the area as a National Register Historic District, spearheaded by Cardozo Shaw Neighborhood Association, further promote the revitalization of the neighborhood and help maintain the area's rich cultural and architectural heritage.

U Street trail sign created by Cultural Tourism DC.



Pearl Bailey at Bohemian Caverns in the 1940s. (Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University)

